

## Correcting Bad Attitudes

Okay, we know that parents are supposed to discipline their children (Proverbs 19:18) and we are committed to correcting our children to help them grow up as righteous men and women. Would you like to know of a way to make your discipline HIGHLY effective?

Sammy is riding in the car with his mother. Sammy keeps taking off his seatbelt and standing up. Mommy says, "Sammy, sit down and put on your seatbelt." Sammy doesn't sit down. "Sammy, sit down or you will get hurt in an accident." Sammy still refuses to sit. Mother reaches her hand back over the seat, pushes Sammy down and says, "Sammy, sit down or I will stop the car and spank you." Sammy replies, "I may be sitting down on the outside, but I'm standing up on the inside." Sammy has an attitude.

Too often parents focus on actions, rather than attitudes. There are seven attitudes that you should pay attention to and then correct in your children. The Bible tells us to "guard the heart for it is the wellspring of life" (Proverbs 4:23; Mark 7:20-23). These seven attitudes are windows into the heart of your child. (They are also a window into our heart.) They expose the root of sin in the heart of your child. If you fail to correct your child's attitudes, then you receive only outward compliance from your children. If you choose to correct unfruitful attitudes, then you will be reaching your child's heart and it will stop many sinful actions from ever occurring.

Talk to your children about these attitudes ? demonstrating them as you discuss them. (This can be a lot of fun as you demonstrate some of the expressions that you see your kids present.) After demonstrating the negative attitude, show them the positive attitude. For example:

*Children, this is a sour face.* [Show sour face.]

*Now you show me a sour face.* [Kids demonstrate their sour faces.]

*A sour face is a bad attitude. God tells us to put off a sour face and to be cheerful. Now demonstrate a cheerful face for me.* [Kids show their cheerful faces.]

*From now on I will be correcting you when you show me a sour face. You will receive a spanking the first time that you use a sour face instead of a cheerful face. This will help you to have a good attitude instead of a bad attitude. You will be a*

*happier person as you learn to be cheerful instead of sour.*

*Now let's try a cheerful face again!*

Families who have begun to correct attitudes have seen a radical turn around in the emotional climate of their home. Your home will be a more positive, loving place to live and your children will begin to correct root attitudes that affect them for a lifetime.

Here is a selection of seven bad attitudes that Scripture wants us to shun.

### **1. WHINING ?**

*"Do all that you do cheerfully as unto the Lord and not unto men" Colossians 3:23.*

If your child says, "I want..." and whines, then address the attitude. Assuming that you have clearly communicated that whining is a bad attitude, then correct it the first time you see it. Your child should learn to say, "May I please..." with a cheerful face, not a whine. Whiners are not appreciated in the real world and God does not appreciate them either (1 Corinthians 10:10).

### **2. SOUR FACE ?**

*"I will leave off my sad countenance and be cheerful." Job 9:27*

*"The Lord said to Cain, ?Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast?" "*  
*Genesis 4:6*

A sour, pouty face is a window into a child's soul. It reveals a bad attitude that hampers the child's spiritual growth and development. Correct it for the good of the child. You will also have a happier home. (Of course, there is a difference between true sadness and a sour face. Please don't misuse this teaching. There is a legitimate expression of emotion ? such as sadness over the loss of a puppy or a friend moving away. Allow these emotions to be expressed, not suppressed. But there is also illegitimate manipulation by a sour face. This is a bad attitude that must be corrected.)

### **3. JERKY BODY MOVEMENTS ?**

*"Better a patient man than a warrior; a man who controls his temper than one who takes a city." Proverbs 16:32*

*"Like a city whose walls are broken down is a man who lacks self-control." Proverbs 25:28*

Examples of jerky body movements would be stomping, flailing of arms, or a child yanking their hand away.

#### **4. DISRESPECTFUL TONE OF VOICE ?**

*"Honor your father and mother." Exodus 20:12*

*"Rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly and revere your God. I am the Lord." Leviticus 19:32*

*"Honor one another above yourselves." Romans 12:10*

Honor is a tremendously important quality to have in your home. Don't allow a disrespectful tone of voice to prevail. When you hear a disrespectful tone of voice, deal with it immediate: "Carolyn, you are not speaking respectfully to daddy. Come with me. We must correct this bad attitude."

#### **5. SELFISHNESS ?**

*"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others." Philippians 2:3,4*

This attitude may be revealed in the refusal to share, the taking of the bigger piece of pie, and the unwillingness to be generous with possessions.

#### **6. GRUMBLING & COMPLAINING ?**

*"Do everything without complaining or arguing." Philippians 2:14*

This is such an important attitude to deal with and yet we often let it slide in both our children and ourselves. Complaining kept the children of Israel from experiencing the promise of God (1 Corinthians 10:10). Develop a thankful spirit!

## **7. RESISTANCE TO SEEKING FORGIVENESS ?**

*"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:8-9*

*"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed." James 5:16*

Our child's unwillingness to seek forgiveness is an attitude that will carry over into their relationships with others and with God. Inquire for the reason why your child is resistant to seeking forgiveness. Correct the attitude before it hardens the heart. Parents, you must model this attitude in your family and your own walk with your Father!